The *Fidelity* of a Loyal Subject, of the Kingdom of *England*:

OR,

An honeſt Act of Fidelity to King James, *King* William, *and the whole Kingdom.*

THE Oath of *Fidelity*, which is ſworn by the Subjects of this Kingdom *to the King*, is ſworn to him not as he is a Natural Perſon (and no more) but as a Political perſon and Principal Member, or Head of a Great Body Politick, the Kingdom; and comprehends Fidelity *to the Whole Body*, and to all the conſtituent Parts of it, to the Common Intereſt of the *Lords*, and to the Common Intereſt of the *Commons*: So that who ever ſets up *for a Separate Intereſt* of any One, to the Prejudice of any of the other, is no Faithful Subject of this Kingdom, but a Traytor, and violates his Allegeance to the whole: Nay, tho' it be in Appearance or Pretence for the King, it doth in effect but betray his true Intereſt, ſo that he may juſtly be puniſhed as a *Traytor* for it.

One, and a conſiderable part of true Fidelity, is to aſſiſt, as much as may be, to the *Diſcovery* of all ſuch things, as are of great Concern, either to the whole Body, or to any of the Great Parts of it, to be fully and plainly Underſtood. And therefore having with ſome Pains and Study made a plain Diſcovery, in my apprehenſion, that *the Whole* is in a very evil and Dangerous Caſe in reſpect of Religion; and that the *State* is likewiſe in a very Bad Caſe in ſome things, and in a very Doubtful Caſe in others of greateſt Concern to the Whole; and Conſidering this Obligation aforeſaid, I have thought it my Duty, in Diſcharge of my Fidelity, to impart my *Diſcoveries* in the moſt proper manner, and to the moſt proper Perſons, I could: That is, What concerns matters of *Religion* to the Aſſembly of the Clergy; and what concerns matters of *State*, to ſuch as are in Authority in the State; as Privy Counſellors, and Members of Parliament. And I have begun to do what I could, as occaſion ſerv'd in both.

Upon a Review of the Reformation I obſerved that *King James* had been very hardly uſed, in my apprehenſion: and thereupon writ a Letter to an Honorable Perſon of the Privy Council, as followeth,

My Lord,

HAving lately had ſpecial Occaſion to review the Proceedings of the *Reformation* here in *England*, andconſider that matter more particularly than heretofore I had done, I did obſerve not only a great deal of indirect, Illegal, Arbitrary and unjuſt Dealings, and ſo much *Corruptions* brought in inſtead of what was pretended to be Reformed, as made that which was a good Cauſe at firſt (For there was great need of a Reformation;) an ill one by ill Management; but moreover that *the Principles of the Reformation*, upon which it was acted (though falſe in themſelves, yet being made Law) do plainly juſtify *King James*, as to a conſiderable part of the matters alledged againſt him; And the reſt being neither Proved, nor ſo much as brought to a fair Examination; and his *Abdication* being not Voluntary, but only *Fuga Metus cauſa*, I, who have hitherto aſſerted King *Williams* Right upon *the Principles of the True Engliſh Government*, not minding the *Innovation* made at the pretended Reformation, am now quite at a loſs what to think, and what to do: Only, if the things alledged be true, though there be no Proof, God knows it, and I can be content to ſit ſtill under his Providence. But if they be not true, it will be in vain to preſume upon *the late Peace*: For there remains an *Apparent Cauſe for a Civil War*: And the Righteous God, who Reſtored King *Charles* the 2*d.* can as eaſily Reſtore King *James* the Second. And therefore I conceive it not only an Act of *Juſtice* to King *James*, but of *Fidelity to King William*, that he be imminded to conſider in time What is fit to be done in this Caſe, as well as of *Providence* for Preſervation of the Peace of the Nation, leaſt ſome Unexpected Occurence ſhould ſurpriſe him with a ſudden *Change of the Minds of the People*. I would not have him be deceived by Truſting to his *Poſſeſſion*, or his *Forces*, or the *Prejudice of the People againſt Popery*, but take Care that *Right* be done, and that the *Peace* of the Kingdom be preſerv'd, at leaſt that there be nothing wanting in him to either. This I thought my Duty to acquaint his Majeſty, or ſome of his Council with, and none more fit than your Lordſhip, and my Lord Arch-Biſhop, to whom I have written more largly concerning other matters of the Reformation, and ſomething of this in Concluſion. And now I think it is time for me to take leave of Church and State, and to retire.

15 *Jan.* 9$\frac{7}{8}$.

Your Lordſhips humble Servant.

I had

I had before, as is ſaid in the Letter, written to the Arch-Biſhop to the like purpoſe, in the Concluſion of a long Letter concerning matters of Religion; but it came not to his Hands till long after. But upon 6 *May* laſt in a Bookſellors ſhop I unexpectedly met with the *Brief Hiſtory of the Times*, by which I was Convinced, That the pretended *Popiſh Plot* was nothing but a very Wicked and abominable Contrivance of Dr. *Tounge* and *Titus Oates*: And by that, and farther Inquiry into the whole matter, that Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* did undoubtedly fall and Cool in the Place and Poſture he was found in; and was not Strangled by any other Hands, as with much ado in more than 2 days time was found by the Jury perſwaded by the Coroner and two Chirurgions, procured by his Brothers, who deſired to Save his Eſtate: And therefore that the Nation is concerned to be Cleared of the Guilt of much *Perjury and Innocent Blood*. Afterwards as unexpectedly came to my Hands the *Hiſtory of that Plot*, for which the E. of *Eſſex* was committed, and the Lord *Ruſſel* ſuffered, by which I was likewiſe convinced of the Reality of that Plot, but whether, or how far thoſe Noble perſons in particular were concern'd in it, is not Neceſſary to be re-examined, or the Earls Death farther inquir'd into. And about the ſame time meeting with ſome of Mr. *Lobbs* acquaintance, I underſtood by them ſomething of what he had Informed them concerning ſome *Caballs of the Engliſh in Holland*, and what part was acted here at the Court in *England*: And tho' I will not ſay I was convinced by Reports, which I had only at the ſecond hand, yet that there was a very *Notable Part acted* here in the Court of *King James*, is ſo apparent, as makes me much Suſpect, That it was not *Popiſh Councels*, but moſt Abominable *Proteſtant Treachery*, by which he was induced to thoſe things, which were deſign'd to Inſnare him; and that the *Succeſs of that Wickedneſs* has been a very *Great Temptation* to divers privy to it, to their Exceſſes even to Infidelity and Apoſtacy, and all manner of Impiety and Wickedneſs, which have appeared more monſtrous and Impudent in this Reign than ever before.

And this Suſpicion is confirmed by this, that beſides thoſe *Overt Acts*, into which he was thus Trapan'd, if it was ſo, there is not any thing charged againſt him, which hath been made Good, or ſo much as brought to *Publick Examination*. Even that which in the Declaration is alleadged for One of the Principal *Motives of the Expedition*, and was *referred to Inquiry by a Parliament*, and was notoriouſly a *Principal Means to move the Hearts of the People* ſo unanimouſly in the Caſe, hath not all this while been brought to *Examination*, tho' *King James* himſelf, as 'tis ſaid, in a *Letter to the Convention* did conjure the Lords and Gentlemen then met to make a *thorough Examination* of it; I mean the Birth of the *Prince of Wales*, as we muſt take him to be, after ſo much Evidence upon Record, and nothing proved to the contrary; but ſuch bold Offers of Proof by ſuter rejected.

Now,

Nay, if things be, what there is such Cause to suspect they are, take it with all its Circumstances, Antecedent, Concomitant, and Consequent, and particularly amongst others, the Death of *King Charles* I. the desperate *Plot against both his Sons*, the Profane *Flattery* of King *William* at the first, and the *Diminution of his Majesty* by Indignities offered him in the last Parliament, design'd, and introduced with the *Old false Pretence of the Groth of Popery*, probably not more against his Person, than against the *True English Government* it self, it is what may justly be feared will render the English and their Protestant Religion, very odious in the apprehension of all other Nations, upon a *Moral Consideration*: but if it be considered according to the Principles of true Religion and Conscience, it is so great a Sin against the Omniscience, as well as Justice, of Almighty God that there is little Hope of Salvation for any, who are knowingly concerned in it, without *Giving Glory to God* by *Publick Confession*, and their utmost *Lawful Endeavour* for Compleat *Restitution*, though with Hazard of their Lives; or for the *Nation* to escape some terrible Judgment of *Divine Vengeance* answerable to so Great Wickedness, unless due Care be taken to expiate it in time.

Besides, if there was nothing in this, there is at present a very *Considerable Opportunity* to make both this Nation and our Neighbours Happy; the Neglect of which if it should be neglected, I can hardly think would escape without Considerable Evil Consequences. There are *Two pernicious Factions*, by which Multitudes of People are carried in different Streams, the *Papal* and the *Protestant*, between which *True Christianity* is Crucified as Christ himself was between the Thieves. They are like *two Mastif Dogs* worrying one the other, and neither can get the Mastery because both alike are faulty: But would either amend their own Cause, the other would not be able to stand up against it. Here I am assured are many who see many *Faults*, which they wish were amended, and would see more, if some Temporal Respects and a Servile Fear of the Civil Power did not becloud them: And in *France* I have been informed by Intelligent Travellers, are divers Worthy Persons among their *Clergy* who have like Apprehensions of Faults amongst them: So that there seems a fair Opportunity and Advantage for the adjusting of *Matters in Religion*, which have no small influence upon our Civil Concerns, if proper Persons be inploy'd on both sides, and much for the Honor of that side, which begins. And for Setling *Matters of State* the Opportunity is so manifest, as needs not Words to declare it. Other matters I have to declare, but such as may be Communicated to all in due Season; but this, though in Print, is only for the Consideration of proper Persons, such as mention'd before.

FINIS.